



# Blueprint for the Environment

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# BLUEPRINT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

## Advice to the President-Elect from America's Environmental Community

Defenders of Wildlife  
Environmental Action  
Environmental Policy Institute  
Friends of the Earth  
Global Tomorrow Coalition  
Izaak Walton League  
National Audubon Society  
National Parks and Conservation Association  
National Wildlife Federation  
Natural Resources Council of America  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Renew America  
Sierra Club  
The Oceanic Society  
The Wilderness Society  
Trout Unlimited  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
Zero Population Growth

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BLUEPRINT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

1400 16th Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20036

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# *Blueprint For The Environment*

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November 1988

Dear President-Elect Bush:

Congratulations on your election by the American people to the nation's highest office. You have attained the most important leadership position in the world, and have an opportunity to accomplish enormous good.

As President, you will be able to provide national and international leadership concerning the great issues of our time. We believe that environmental problems rank with the threat of nuclear war as the most serious of all the challenges we face. It is essential that we address and solve problems like global warming of the atmosphere, loss of tropical forests and the living species they contain, and the myriad of assaults on our nation's land, air, and water before they cause irreparable harm. This will happen only if you provide strong, sustained leadership.

Recognizing this, America's environmental community came together a year ago to prepare for your consideration a "Blueprint for the Environment": comprehensive recommendations concerning the actions our federal government should take to address these problems. The Blueprint, consisting of over 700 specific recommendations, has already been delivered to your representatives. This report highlights our major themes.

We urge you to give the most serious consideration to these carefully prepared suggestions. We are eager to meet with you and your representatives to discuss them. Our groups—with a total of more than 6,000,000 members—are ready to assist in their implementation.

We ask you to provide leadership in meeting these challenges and fashioning a brighter tomorrow. The welfare of this and all future generations hangs in the balance.

Sincerely,

Thomas B. Stoel, Jr.  
*Chair*

Clay E. Peters  
*Executive Director*

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## Foreword

*Blueprint for the Environment* is a cooperative effort by America's environmental community to develop comprehensive recommendations to be presented to the President-elect following the 1988 election concerning the actions our federal government should take to solve the environmental problems that confront the United States and the world. The participants include the organizations listed below, together with staff members from many other organizations and concerned individuals.

More than 700 detailed recommendations, assembled by cabinet department or agency, have already been delivered to representatives of the new administration. This report provides an overview of the major themes and broad recommendations. Most of the organizations which assembled the Blueprint do not deal with all the issues discussed in this report, and cannot endorse every recommendation. However, they all agree with its overall thrust and the urgent need for additional federal actions to address environmental problems.

We would like to acknowledge the following people and organizations for their contributions to the development of the Blueprint:

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## OUR PLANET IN PERIL

Life in this vast, mysterious universe, science tells us, is rare, perhaps unique. The earth is a sparkling island of life in a dark, inanimate sea.

Today, this fragile island that supports and sustains us is in peril, threatened by the very life it nurtures.

Humankind, the most highly evolved species of life on earth, has the power to destroy the earth. Not just in a nuclear holocaust, but in less cataclysmic, but no less significant, ways. Our small, seemingly insignificant acts of everyday existence threaten to overwhelm the earth's fragile and finite life support systems.

The world and our nation face environmental threats of unprecedented proportions:

- *Global warming of the atmosphere* threatens to devastate agriculture, forests, and coastlines around the world.
- *Depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer* will damage agriculture and marine life and cause an epidemic of skin cancer.
- *Ocean pollution* is killing sea creatures and littering our coasts with filth.
- *Environmental degradation in developing nations* threatens the economic welfare, the health, and the very survival of hundreds of millions of people and the functioning of ecosystems of worldwide importance.
- *Loss of tropical forests and other wildlife habitats* threatens to extinguish forever one-fourth of all the animal and plant species on the earth by the end of the century.
- *Population growth* is a major contributor to all these global environmental problems.
- *U.S. population pressures* threaten the environment all across our nation.
- *Wasteful and environmentally harmful use of energy* contributes to many other environmental problems, costs U.S. consumers more than a hundred billion dollars a year, and reduces our national security.
- *Acid rain and other forms of air pollution* are stunting our forests, sterilizing our lakes, killing our fish and assaulting our lungs.
- *Water pollution* makes drinking water unhealthful, harms aquatic life, and deprives us of major opportunities for recreation.
- *Uncontrolled toxic substances* are poisoning our citizens and the environment. Solid waste dumped in landfills contaminates groundwater and emits toxic substances when incinerated.

- *Soil loss* degrades our land base, reducing productivity in agriculture, forestry, and grazing.

- *Inadequate management of federal lands* causes not only environmental degradation but loss of precious recreational opportunities:

Each of these problems represents a profound threat in its own right. Taken together, they constitute one of the greatest crises ever faced by our nation and all of humanity.

## OUR RESPONSIBILITY

Our future is at stake. We face critically important choices: whether to take the actions necessary to ensure the livability of our planet or to stand by and watch the decline of the natural systems on which all life depends.

Our nation is one of the wealthiest and most powerful on earth. We have the power — and the responsibilities — of a leader. If we fail to act, we can't expect others to do so.

A special responsibility falls on our federal government. Many of the problems we face are global and national in scope. They require federal action and federal leadership.

Our new President and his administration must act very quickly if our nation is to fulfill its responsibilities. We cannot afford to wait. Each week and month of inaction undercuts a future of comfort and harmony with the earth, and brings ever closer a future that jeopardizes life itself.

Realizing this, America's environmental community came together a year ago in a coordinated effort to develop a "Blueprint for the Environment": recommendations to the President-Elect and his top officials concerning the actions needed to address the full range of environmental problems we face. Those recommendations — more than 700 of them — have already been delivered to representatives of the new administration.

Our recommendations are directed to our new President, not to the Congress, the states, or individual citizens. Obviously, all of us need to act if environmental problems are to be solved. But in many areas the missing ingredient is Presidential leadership. Most of the actions we recommend can be taken by the President without the need for new legislation. In others, we recommend that the President make proposals for new laws and work with the Congress to get them enacted.

This is very much a mainstream document. Only two years ago, the National Governors Association unanimously adopted major policy positions concerning the global environment which are very similar to what we recommend here.

A central theme of our recommendations is the necessity of better stewardship. Our power to alter the environment is so great today that it can diminish the capacity of our planet to sustain life. This power carries with it a solemn obligation to safeguard the earth's natural systems and the life that depends on them.

A corollary principle is that we must look ahead and take early actions to prevent environmental harm. We cannot rely, as we have too often in the past, on tardy efforts to clean up or mitigate damage that has already occurred. Prevention is wiser and less expensive than cure. Some kinds of harm — the loss of a whole species of life, for example — can never be cured. And every day that we postpone corrective actions increases the cost and difficulty of the actions we ultimately must take.

The magnitude of the problems we face makes it plain that our nation has not fulfilled its obligation of responsible stewardship. The central thrust of our recommendations is that our new President and his administration must make sure that we fulfill that obligation from now on.

There is also an important role for education. Public knowledge, understanding, and support are essential for progress in improving the quality of our environment. While the President and the Congress possess the persuasive and legal powers to lead the nation, its citizens are not likely to follow willingly if they do not understand and support the directions of their leaders.

## **ACTIONS TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT**

One of the new administration's greatest challenges will be to protect the health of the global and domestic environment and ensure that economic development is environmentally sustainable. Not long ago we realized that our most serious environmental problems might have national as well as local impacts.

Now we confront problems that threaten not only our nation but the whole world. Warming of the world's climate and depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer are examples of new environmental problems that do not respect political, geographic, or cultural boundaries. Degradation of the land base, loss of biological diversity, and rapid population growth threaten nations in every part of the world, including our own.

There is good news concerning these global issues. For the most part, workable solutions have been identified. The technologies that will be needed are available or in sight. The financial costs will not bankrupt the world or individual nations.

Moreover, there is a growing spirit of international cooperation in response to these common threats. The 1987 Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, headed by Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, indicates a remarkable degree of international consensus on the problems and the urgent need to address them.

These are encouraging developments. But the problems will not be solved without leadership from the United States. We are the acknowledged leader of the Western industrialized nations that control most of the world's wealth and technical know-how. If we sit on the sidelines, these issues will not be adequately addressed.

### **Global Warming and Ozone Destruction**

A global problem of enormous dimensions is now upon us. Scientists have been warning for more than a decade that the burning of fossil fuels and other human activities are loading the atmosphere with gases that will warm the atmosphere around the world through the "greenhouse effect."

In June 1988, Dr. James Hansen, director of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Institute for Space Studies, told the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee that there is now sufficient evidence to conclude that the greenhouse effect is already warming the earth. Even before this summer's heat and devastating midwest drought, the 1980s had included the four hottest summers of the past century.

Few have been able to grasp the troubling truth that the heat and drought we experienced in 1988 are only the mildest example of what we will experience if the global warming trend continues. The National Academy of Sciences estimates the potential increase in global temperature over the next 50 to 100 years to be between 2.7 and 8.1 degrees Fahrenheit. At the low end of this range, the increase would bring global average temperatures to a level not known in 6,000 years. At the high end, we would have to adjust, in less than a century, to average temperatures not seen since the age of the dinosaurs.

Scientists tell us that the consequences of global warming are certain to include a significant sea-level rise as oceans expand and polar ice melts; extraordinary changes in weather and precipitation patterns; destruction of forests and plant life; and disruptions in current agricultural patterns. The question is not whether these effects will occur, but to what degree and how fast.

The extent and magnitude of these changes are mind-boggling. With respect to the United States alone:

- A two-foot rise in sea level, within the range of current predictions, would destroy 80 percent of U.S. coastal wetlands, with their immense biological productivity; force salt water into coastal drinking water systems; and cause massive changes in the shape and usability of shorelines.
- The productivity of the midwestern grain belt could be drastically reduced due to increased temperatures and changes in rainfall, thus undermining world food security and U.S. agricultural exports.
- Most of the United States could become unsuitable habitat for both the southern deciduous forests and the northern boreal forests. Grasslands would expand quickly into these areas. Continual climatic changes would prevent reestablishment of deciduous forests in more northern latitudes.

Similar effects would occur all over the world. In many areas, the impacts would be even more devastating than in this country. Low-lying nations like Bangladesh would lose much of their territory as the seas rise. Mountainous countries would experience devastating soil erosion as forests die. Nations that can barely feed their people not only would lose their own harvests but no longer could depend on the United States and other traditional grain exporters to fill the gap.

Despite growing scientific evidence that the greenhouse effect is real and pleas by leading scientists for governmental action, our government until recently has insisted that the only need is for further research. Yet science has identified many of the steps that are needed to hold global warming within tolerable limits. We must begin to take those actions now or pay a terrible price for delay.

We should begin an all-out effort to minimize worldwide emissions of the most important greenhouse gas: carbon dioxide. It is currently estimated that three-fourths of human-caused CO<sub>2</sub> emissions come from burning fossil fuels and the remaining one-fourth from deforestation, mostly in the tropics. We should act on both fronts.

The actions needed to reduce U.S. fossil-fuel emissions are described in the section on Energy. But this is a worldwide problem; the United States alone accounts for about 25 percent of global emissions. While making changes to set a good example at home, we must promote international actions as well. We should encourage development of an international convention limiting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to tolerable levels, and also develop cooperative efforts with foreign nations.

Deforestation is another contributor to the greenhouse effect, both from the burning of the forests and from the loss of the carbon dioxide-absorbing capacity of the plant life. Preventing further loss of forests, espe-

cially tropical forests, and world-wide planting of trees could make a major contribution to controlling global warming.

The changes in the earth's atmosphere are also symptomatic of world population growth. In attempting to meet the basic human needs of billions of people, we are producing many of the gases contributing to the greenhouse effect. While efficiency and other efforts can reduce these impacts, in the long run our success in minimizing global warming is tied to whether and when we achieve global population stabilization.

Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), man-made chemicals used for refrigeration and other industrial purposes, cause about one-sixth of the global warming effect. We must halt emissions of these gases as soon as possible.

CFCs pose another global threat. Since 1974, scientists have predicted that CFCs and other man-made gases are depleting the thin stratospheric ozone layer that shields the earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation. In the last few years, atmospheric scientists have demonstrated that this depletion is actually occurring, and faster than they had expected. The increased radiation from the depletion of the ozone layer threatens not only a skin cancer epidemic but also severe harm to agriculture, and drastic disruptions in the ecological balance of the ocean by harming the tiny organisms that are at the bottom of the marine food chain.

The United States and other nations have begun to act to eliminate harmful CFCs and other ozone-destroying chemicals. But we must take further steps and persuade other nations to take similar stringent measures.

#### **Recommended Presidential Actions:**

*The President should announce in his Inaugural Address or in an Environmental Message that minimizing global warming will be a top priority of his domestic and foreign policy. He should issue an executive order establishing goals and defining the responsibilities of all relevant agencies. He should work with the Congress to develop and enact appropriate legislation.*

*The President should act to ensure that global warming is high on the agendas of both the 1989 Western Economic Summit and the Global Environmental Summit meeting that he has pledged to convene. These personal meetings of top leaders are an excellent way of building the international consensus and cooperation that are essential for effective global action.*

*The President should direct the Secretary of State to make bilateral approaches to key nations, including the Soviet Union and major developing countries like China and India, and to work with other nations to develop,*

*under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Program, a global treaty requiring that CO<sub>2</sub> emissions be reduced through increases in energy efficiency and greater reliance on renewable energy sources.* This problem can be solved only through international cooperation, and the United States can be a leader in bringing about that cooperation. We must set an example by acting to reduce our own CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the ways suggested in the discussion on Energy below.

*The President should propose that other nations join us in a major program to halt tropical deforestation and to plant trees on a massive scale, in order to reduce the buildup of atmospheric carbon dioxide. As part of that effort, the President should promote a major reforestation program for the United States.*

The United States government has recently been an international leader in efforts to halt ozone depletion. U.S. industry seems to be ahead in finding acceptable substitutes for ozone-depleting chemicals. *The President should instruct the Environmental Protection Agency to take all actions necessary to phase out U.S. use of chlorofluorocarbons in five to seven years. To ensure that CFC emissions from other countries are also stopped, the President should direct the State Department and EPA to work with the United Nations Environment Program and other nations to achieve an equally rapid worldwide phaseout by strengthening the international ozone depletion protocol signed in Montreal in September 1987.*

## **Energy**

How we choose to produce and use energy will deeply affect the quality of our environment and the legacy we pass on to future generations. Heavy dependence on fossil fuels is responsible for air pollution in our cities, acid rain that is damaging our forests, and ecologically destructive oil drilling in Arctic and coastal regions. Fossil fuels are also responsible for about half the greenhouse gases that are warming the earth. The United States now adds over a billion tons of climate-altering carbon to the atmosphere each year.

Unless U.S. energy trends are redirected in the next decade, a host of environmental problems will become increasingly unmanageable. Energy decisions in the next four years can continue our wasteful use of fossil fuels and nuclear power, or they can move the nation towards an environmentally attractive and sustainable economy that is based on improved energy efficiency and clean renewable energy sources.

The new administration has an extraordinary opportunity — to both strengthen the economy and improve the environment via least-cost ener-

gy policy. Such a policy would ensure that government programs and spending are allocated so that the most cost-effective means to supply energy services and reduce energy-related pollution are pursued first.

By avoiding wasteful projects like synthetic fuels development and nuclear breeder reactors, the federal energy budget can actually be reduced while the national energy picture is substantially improved.

Energy efficiency leads the list of least-cost energy sources, according to numerous recent studies. U.S. energy efficiency has improved by 25 percent since the early 1970s, cutting the national energy bill by over \$100 billion. But this impressive performance was bettered by Japan and many European countries, and today, U.S. energy efficiency is again leveling off, at a point at which the U.S. still spends \$200 billion more each year on energy supplies than it would have to at Japanese energy efficiency levels. U.S. automobiles, buildings, and factories could all be eventually made about twice as energy efficient as they are today.

Investments in improved energy efficiency would be far more cost-effective than investments in offshore oil or electricity from new power plants. This has been proven in California and the Pacific Northwest, where energy efficiency improvements have been faster than for the nation as a whole. But market and institutional barriers to improved energy efficiency forestall many of these investments. National energy policy must be directed to overcoming these barriers via new fuel taxes, utility and government loan programs, and mandatory standards for some technologies.

Energy efficiency must be recognized as a key part of any strategy to deal with urban air pollution, acid rain, and global warming. Such programs should allow utilities and state and local governments to meet required standards by improving energy efficiency as well as by adopting abatement technologies.

Efforts to improve the fuel efficiency of automobiles and the entire transportation system need special emphasis. Fuel economy of new cars in the United States has now leveled off at 28 miles per gallon. New technologies are already available that make 60-80 mile-per-gallon cars possible. A more efficient fleet of cars would lower the country's oil import bill, reduce urban air pollution, and slow global warming. Mass transit and passenger railroads are more energy- and cost-efficient and deserve greater support.

The country will also need new sources of energy that are not depletable, do not pollute, and do not lead to global warming. The boom and bust approach to renewable energy during the past decade must be

replaced by a true national commitment to gradual and steady progress. Biofuels, wind energy, geothermal energy, and solar energy all have enormous potential to contribute to the country's energy future. If there were a level playing field in which renewable energy sources could compete fairly with conventional sources, the use of renewables would grow steadily.

Solar photovoltaics that produce electricity directly from sunlight deserve special emphasis since they have the potential to supply power to homes and industries across the nation. Photovoltaic costs are now falling rapidly, but the once dominant U.S. industry is now being challenged by rivals in Europe and Japan that get more generous government support. If U.S. support of photovoltaics is not strengthened, not only may we be slow in using this essential technology, but we may lose the leadership in a key strategic industry.

Nuclear power, on the other hand, does not currently pass the least-cost test for meeting the nation's energy needs or solving related environmental problems such as global warming. Despite billions of dollars of past government subsidies, it is now one of the most expensive energy sources and brings with it serious environmental problems, most notably the safe disposal of nuclear waste. Nuclear power should find its financial support in the marketplace so that scarce federal funds can be applied to emerging technologies with less environmental impact. Federal funding should be directed to the problems of nuclear safety, reactor decommissioning, and nuclear waste transportation and disposal.

A sound least-cost national energy policy is key to the country's energy future. It can pave the way for the development of cost-effective and cleaner energy sources such as efficiency and renewable sources. The longer we avoid this choice, the more our nation's competitiveness will falter and the worse our environmental problems will become.

#### **Recommended Presidential Actions:**

*The President should direct the Secretary of Energy to take immediate steps to develop a National Least-Cost Energy Plan that allows all energy investments to compete on a fair economic basis, while taking into account the environmental costs associated with fossil fuel use. The plan would ensure that energy needs are met in the most cost-effective way and allow energy efficiency and renewable energy resources to compete with conventional resources on a level playing field.*

*The President should make the slowing of the global warming a central goal of U.S. energy policy. Steps should be taken to establish national targets for overall efficiency and the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions.*

*The President should take immediate steps to increase federal support of research, development, and commercialization of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources, each of which has been neglected in recent years.*

*The President should propose legislation that will help increase the fuel economy of new automobiles and light trucks to 45 miles per gallon and 35 miles per gallon, respectively, by the year 2000. Attainment of these targets should be supported by an increased "gas guzzler" tax applied at higher efficiency levels, a "gas sipper" rebate for efficient vehicles, and a gasoline tax to encourage increasing the efficiency of all vehicles.*

### **Protection of the Oceans**

Life was born in the sea and emerged from the sea to populate the earth. Covering seventy percent of the earth's surface, the oceans are an environment of tempest and tranquility, a source of wonder and awe.

The oceans are also our planet's primary life support system. They generate most of our oxygen, precipitation, and weather patterns. They feed and provide a livelihood for a large proportion of humanity. They are also threatened.

Widespread overdevelopment and pollution jeopardizes oceans and coastal areas worldwide. More than a third of our nation's shellfish-producing areas are closed or face harvest restrictions because of pollution. Pollution has damaged and degraded every major harbor, bay, and estuary in the continental United States.

Overdevelopment is straining our coastal barrier islands and destroying critical wetlands habitat. We dump dredged material in our crucial estuaries and coastal waters. Trash and plastic debris kills hundreds of thousands of marine mammals and countless seabirds. Offshore oil and gas development degrades air quality, brings the threat of oil spills, and pours toxic contaminants into our coastal waters.

The stress on the ocean and coastal environment is predictable. Most Americans live and work within an afternoon's drive of the sea. Most of our largest metropolitan areas are found near the coast. Many of our fastest growing communities are concentrated in the nation's coastal states. As a result, sensitive coastal areas are being destroyed and coastal waters polluted.

Most troubling, the situation is deteriorating faster and faster. The degradation is particularly intense in nearer coastal waters where marine life is most abundant. Much less is known about the deeper ocean. Ominously, there are strong signs of damage there, as well.

We can and we must deal with this threat to our priceless oceans and coasts. Our planet depends on healthy oceans for its survival. And our economic health depends to a significant extent on the ecological health of our oceans.

A top priority must be law enforcement. Hundreds of cities and industrial facilities do not comply with the requirements of the Clean Water Act. Compliance will be expensive, but without compliance, our coastal waters and estuaries will continue on their downward spiral. Building treatment facilities is a vital investment. The nation, the states, and localities must take more aggressive action to prohibit coastal contamination from pipeline discharges and urban and agricultural runoff.

Development along the coasts must be managed so that it does not overwhelm the capacity of coastal areas to absorb wastes and accommodate the impacts of development. We must stop dumping our sewage sludge and industrial wastes at sea.

Americans also must stop shipping wastes on ocean barges to developing countries. The practice is dangerous and insulting and sends exactly the wrong message to the world. We must learn to work together to solve environmental problems. We should not do to other nations what we are unwilling to do to ourselves.

For decades, commercial fishing interests and others have debated how to ensure that overfishing does not deplete fish populations or harm the ecosystems that support them. Many ocean fisheries are multinational; the debate often becomes distorted by the politics of short-term greed and nationalism.

In international fisheries debates, the United States should promote long-term, sustainable, resource conservation and welcome broad public participation. There is no substitute for a President who will back up our ocean resource managers when the international politics get hot.

#### **Recommended Presidential Actions:**

*The President should direct the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Coast Guard to use all existing authorities to prohibit release of toxic and other contaminated wastes into the marine environment.* These actions should include prohibitions on ocean dumping of sewage sludge, industrial wastes and contaminated dredge spoils, pipeline discharges from municipal sewage plants and industrial treatment facilities, and runoff from cities, agriculture, and other sources. The President should also encourage the states to use all their powers to the same ends.

*The President should instruct EPA, the Interior Department, and NOAA to increase special protective measures to protect marine resources. These should include expansion of the marine sanctuaries system, protection of tidal and non-tidal wetlands, and undeveloped barrier islands through elimination of federal subsidies and other means, ecosystem management of fisheries, and revision of the five-year offshore oil and gas leasing program to exclude environmentally sensitive areas from leasing.*

*The President should take initiatives to ensure that the United States will support and promote domestic and international policies that give greater attention to protection and wise use of the marine environment. As part of this effort, the President should proclaim "Coastweeks" in the fall of 1989 and designate 1990 the "Year of the Coast." The President should strengthen the Coastal Zone Management Program to address issues such as sea level rise and coastal hazards.*

*The President should call for U.S. ratification of the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention and instruct U.S. officials involved in global treaties such as the London Dumping Convention and regional agreements such as those dealing with the Caribbean, South Pacific, and Great Lakes to exercise environmentally sensitive leadership.*

### **Environmentally Sustainable Development**

Three-quarters of the world's people live in developing countries. A large proportion of them live on the edge of malnutrition and in abject poverty. Their efforts to eke out a living puts severe stress on their environment in the form of overgrazing, erosion, and denuding of the land for firewood. Population growth causes these pressures to multiply.

Commercial exploitation puts additional stress on the environment. Timber companies often cut forests for export without concern for unique wildlife habitats or for reforestation. Commercial agriculture features overuse of pesticides. Many factories operate without pollution controls.

Soil erosion, deforestation, loss of water supplies, and pollution threaten the economic welfare, the health, and the very survival of hundreds of millions of people. Forty thousand people a day are dying of preventable, waterborne diseases. The recent drought in Africa caused tens of millions to leave their homes in search of food.

Faced with severe economic pressures, the governments of these nations may have higher priorities than environmental protection. When they are committed to protect the environment, they often lack trained people and other essential resources.

The debt crisis and other international economic policies make it even more difficult to deal with these problems. It is absurd to think that developing nations can meet the needs of growing populations in an environmentally sustainable manner when the United States and other industrialized nations are extracting billions of dollars in capital from them each year on net balance, instead of investing in them. In many nations, per capita income has actually declined during the 1980s. Yet the United States has refused to even consider significant reductions in the 1 trillion dollars in debt now owed by developing nations, even though much of it can never be repaid.

These enormous, interrelated problems obviously will not be solved overnight. However, we cannot afford to lose time. These problems have already festered too long. The fate of much of humanity, most of the earth's tropical forests, and other precious resources hangs in the balance. If these problems are not solved, the resulting political and economic instabilities will pose threats to the whole world. And it may prove impossible to address global warming and other issues requiring worldwide cooperation.

Most developing nations are incapable of solving these problems without external assistance. Properly focused foreign aid can do much to help them ensure that their development is environmentally sustainable. The U.S. bilateral aid program has had some successes in this regard, but has lacked a clear focus and has not been a Presidential priority.

The World Bank and the other multilateral development banks are the world's largest development aid agencies. They must stop financing environmental disasters and become a strong force for development that is environmentally sensitive and sustainable. The World Bank has recently made some progress toward incorporating environmental concerns into its lending practices, but it and the other multilateral development banks have a long way to go.

The United States is not only one of the world's wealthiest nation but is also the leader of the industrialized nations that command most of the world's wealth and technical knowledge. In addition to ensuring that development in our own nation is environmentally sustainable, we must help developing countries get on to a sustainable course and persuade others to join with us.

#### **Recommended Presidential Actions:**

*The President should announce that solving environmental problems in developing nations will be a central focus of U.S. foreign policy. He should emphasize that the future of the world depends on the fate of the vast*

majority who live in developing nations, and that we must work with them to ensure a sound world environment. He should direct the State Department, the National Security Council, and our ambassadors abroad to treat these issues as priorities.

*The President should direct that our bilateral foreign assistance be focused on helping nations achieve sustainable development by:*

- Enhancing their agricultural resource base and promoting environmentally sound food production.
- Meeting their energy needs in ways that are environmentally sustainable, with an emphasis on energy assistance designed to meet human needs while minimizing global warming.
- Conserving tropical forests and biological diversity.
- Stabilizing population.

We should target much of our family planning, agricultural, and forestry aid on sub-Saharan Africa, the region of the world closest to environmental disaster. In Central America, U.S. assistance should be redirected toward activities that support sustainable development. Our aid should feature small-scale, local projects designed to help people help themselves. These projects should be selected with an eye toward replicating them on a wide scale if they prove successful. We should use our influence with other aid-giving nations to get them to focus their aid on similar objectives.

The President should direct the Secretary of the Treasury to step up U.S. pressures on the World Bank and the other multilateral development banks to improve their environmental performance, and to enlist other nations to join with us in influencing the banks. The President should exert strong leadership to solve the international debt crisis. The United States should make constructive proposals, including forgiveness of debts owed our government by the poorest nations, and present them at next year's Western Economic Summit and other appropriate fora. Large-scale "debt-for-nature swaps," in which developing nations agree to protect their forests and other environmental resources in return for debt relief, should be part of the solution.

### **Conserving the Earth's Plant and Animal Species**

In the next decade, a quarter of all of the earth's plant and animal species may vanish forever due to human actions. We face a wave of extinctions comparable to that which destroyed the dinosaurs and many other species of life 65 million years ago. But it will happen much faster, as a result of the actions of the human species.

It is difficult to overstate the importance of preserving endangered forms of life. The rosy periwinkle, an endangered tropical plant, was the source of a leading anti-leukemia drug. A quarter of the prescription drugs in the United States have originated from tropical plants or animals. Our corn and other major agricultural crops require infusions of wild strains in order to resist pests and diseases.

Most of the impending extinctions will occur in the tropics, due to human destruction of plant and animal habitats, especially in tropical forests which are reservoirs of enormous biological diversity. To halt the wave of extinctions, we must protect key habitat areas while meeting the basic needs of hundreds of millions of rural poor and stabilizing human populations.

Development assistance agencies can help developing nations conserve habitats and species. The U.S. Agency for International Development has made a start, but the world's other aid agencies are doing little. A treaty is badly needed to provide a framework for international cooperation, especially in habitat protection.

In the United States, entire species have vanished at our hand, and others have been reduced to small, threatened territories. Our domestic endangered species programs have enjoyed some major successes. But in recent years, the program has foundered terribly.

#### **Recommended Presidential Actions:**

*The President should take actions to ensure that conservation of the earth's plant and animal species is a major international and domestic priority of his administration.*

*The President should place species conservation on the agenda of the Global Environmental Summit meeting that he has pledged to convene.*

*The President should direct the Agency for International Development to greatly strengthen its program to assist developing countries in conserving species and habitats. The President's fiscal 1990 budget should request at least \$10 million for this program, rising to \$20 million in fiscal 1991. AID should convene a meeting of bilateral and multilateral aid donors to devise methods for increasing their support for species conservation in developing nations. The President should direct the other federal agencies of the executive branch with relevant expertise, such as the Interior Department, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and National Science Foundation, to make conservation of biological diversity a high priority.*

*The President and Secretary of State should give strong support to efforts to develop and negotiate an international convention to identify and protect valuable plant and animal habitats on a worldwide basis. The convention should establish a fund to assist poor nations in conserving habitats. The United States should pledge at least \$50 million annually.*

*In addition, the President should direct that the United States begin immediately to develop systematic programs of cooperation with nations that possess species-rich, threatened habitats, such as Brazil, Madagascar, Indonesia, and the Andean nations of South America.*

*The President should instruct the Secretary of the Interior to implement vigorously and fully the U.S. Endangered Species Act, reauthorized in the 100th Congress. He should instruct the Secretary to give special attention to expediting the listing of species, development of recovery plans, and acquisition of habitat.*

### **Our Land**

Americans have always been deeply attached to the land. It supplies us with the material needs for our daily lives. Our association with it nurtures our spirit, our emotions, and our dreams.

When Europeans arrived on the shores of the continent centuries ago, the land was an untamed wilderness of seemingly unbounded wealth. As our population has grown and spread, we have altered the land. The one-time sea of wilderness has been transformed to occasional remnant islands of wilderness, set within a sea of civilization. We have entirely extirpated many species of native wildlife, and greatly reduced many others.

This process is still ongoing. But we are beginning to regret the losses of species and natural beauty. More and more, communities across America are questioning and often fighting the relentless pressure of growth and development which, once it arrives, seems to stay and transform forever.

As we experience this transformation of our land and resources, it is important to recognize that over one-quarter of the nation's land is owned and controlled by the federal government. Because the federal lands are so vast, an opportunity exists to set a tone, establish leadership, and exert influence concerning the protection of natural ecosystems and the plant and animal species which comprise them. Yet differing and uncoordinated approaches by various federal agencies and programs currently work against this opportunity and need.

Our political process, demonstrating considerable foresight, has developed a marvelous series of federal resource systems in the forms of

parks, forests, wildlife refuges, wilderness, rivers, trails and public domain lands. Yet the integrated, ecological management of these systems remains unfulfilled. Many unit boundaries, established in earlier times, were drawn to correspond to convenient political jurisdictions or survey lines, rather than the needs of the ecosystem involved. Management of identical resources on either side of a boundary line by different agencies with divergent objectives often creates conflict and environmental harm. More integration is needed across boundaries, based on ecological principles. There is a pressing need to develop integrated regional resource management plans.

Many of our federally owned renewable resources are not being managed in a manner which will ensure their availability in perpetuity. We often exploit resources and divest of them too hastily at prices that do not provide a proper monetary return.

A number of needs and opportunities related to the management of federal lands, resources, and programs stand out. We need forceful efforts to better protect our national park, wildlife refuge, and wilderness systems from the adverse impacts of civilization encroaching upon them, and from public overuse within them. We need to expand our National Park System to embrace new additions and to reconfigure the boundaries of some park units to better protect ecosystem values.

We should stimulate state and local efforts to establish public greenways and scenic byways, as recommended by the President's Commission on Americans Outdoors in 1986. We must provide for more outdoor recreation opportunities in or near cities — close to where people live. We need to expand the proven programs of state and local youth conservation corps, where our young people can contribute to, and be stimulated by, the values of our great American outdoors.

We need to develop and adopt an organic act for our National Wildlife Refuge System. We should ensure permanent funding for the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act to conserve non-game (watchable wildlife) species. We must achieve a goal of no net loss of wetlands throughout the nation.

We must increase the emphasis on ecological management of our national forests. We should reduce timber sales on the national forests to sustainable levels, and eliminate the sale of timber below cost. A moratorium should immediately be placed on the cutting of old growth timber on Pacific Northwest forests.

We need to increase the emphasis on ecological management and resource protection on public domain lands managed by the Bureau of

Land Management, and provide better controls over the exploitation of timber, minerals and forage. We should pursue vigorously the rounding out of our National Wilderness Preservation System, with particular emphasis on wilderness designations on BLM lands.

We need to expand greatly the protection of the remaining free-flowing stretches of our nation's rivers, as parts of our Wild and Scenic Rivers system, and intensify our efforts to work with and encourage state and local governments to take complementary actions. We must establish minimum flows from impoundments to allow stable fish populations, and provide for anadromous fish passage at all impoundments.

We must exert better control over mineral extraction on and off the public lands by revising the obsolete 1872 mining law and by better implementation of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977. Reforms related to on-shore oil and gas leasing activities also are needed.

We need to implement vigorously the conservation title of the Food Security Act of 1985 to achieve better protection of the nation's soil, water, wetlands, and prime farmland. We should build upon the Food Security Act's accomplishments with further reforms to protect ground water, reduce non-point source pollution of streams and lakes, promote low-chemical farming alternatives, and generally improve environmental quality in rural America.

We need essentially to declare an end to the construction of major water impoundment and channelization projects and focus our attention on the more effective use and conservation of the nation's water resources. Federal subsidies for water development and distribution should be phased out.

Building on our past record, we need to mount a modern day equivalent to the conservation leadership of President Teddy Roosevelt -- a new national conservation strategy of leadership and action as a model for the entire world.

### **Recommended Presidential Actions**

*The President should declare by executive order, and reinforce by other means, that federal lands and resources will be managed under a mandate of conservation stewardship. These lands and resources should be managed as environmental exemplars for the world.*

*The President should take steps to ensure that when public resources are sold or leased, such sale or lease should never occur at less than fair market value.*

*The President should propose increased funding for protection and management of federally-owned lands, and in particular should support the creation of an American Heritage Trust to more adequately secure and safeguard the natural and historic heritage of the nation.*

*The President should affirm his commitment to natural resources protection in U.S. agriculture.* He should, at a minimum, announce his firm commitment to the non-degradation of cropland and soil productivity, the protection of prime farmland from non-agricultural conversion, the protection and restoration of natural wetlands, and expanded research and development of low-input farming systems.

### **Pollution**

In 1969, globs of crude oil began washing up on the beaches of Santa Barbara, California, and the modern environmental movement was born. In the early 1970s, we found many cases of gross pollution: the Cuyahoga River on fire, Lake Erie dying, Los Angeles choked in smog. Our nation enacted a series of laws — the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, and others — and we began to curb pollution.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, a new wave of pollution problems inundated America. This time the symbols were the skull and crossbones signifying poison: Love Canal, Times Beach, and many others. Again, we enacted a series of laws — the Toxic Substances Control Act, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, Superfund — and began to implement them.

Some progress has been made. But the tide of pollution has not been stemmed. We are falling behind, and our environment and our health are at serious risk. We must realize the direct connection between the health of the planet and the health of the person.

The most important statement that can be made with respect to our massively escalating pollution problems is that we must immediately get into a mode of prevention rather than cure. We must also recognize that there really is no more “away” where we can throw things.

We have done much to remove conventional pollutants from our air. But the eyes of urban residents still smart from high ozone levels all across the country. Many areas still are far from reaching standards for healthy air set almost two decades ago. Acid rain continues to drench U.S. and Canadian lakes and forests with sulfur and nitrogen compounds. We have hardly begun to control other toxic substances that contaminate the air we breathe.

While the vast majority of large sewage treatment plants have met deadlines for installing advanced treatment facilities, some major population centers and most smaller facilities have lagged behind. Industrial plants continue to spew toxic pollutants into our lakes and streams. Discharge permits must be tightened as increased flows of residual pollutants threaten our rivers and lakes. We have made virtually no progress in reducing run-off of sediment, fertilizers, pesticides, and other toxic materials from farms, construction sites, suburban areas, and city streets. As a result, at least a quarter of our rivers and lakes are unsafe for fishing and swimming. This runoff also threatens groundwater in many areas of the United States.

The federal government has been far too slow in testing pesticides and other toxic chemicals to determine whether they are causing undue harm to health and the environment. The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act is an anachronistic and cumbersome mechanism for regulating pesticides. We must devise a better law that identifies problem chemicals early, prevents groundwater contamination, and protects the health and safety of agricultural workers.

The Superfund cleanup of toxic dumps is foundering. The government has created a cumbersome, bureaucratic process that slows cleanup and often results in temporary, not permanent, remedies. Only a handful of sites have been cleaned up. Thousands remain as chemical time bombs.

The United States is being inundated by a growing mountain of solid waste. Landfills all across the country are filling up far faster than planned: 45 percent of all municipal solid waste landfills will close by 1991. Many are leaching poisonous waste water into local streams and aquifers. While localities talk of increased recycling, many municipalities are turning to incineration as a way to reduce the volume of waste. When they test ash from incinerators and discover that it is toxic, they receive no guidance from the federal government on how to dispose of it.

The Environmental Protection Agency, the lead federal pollution control agency, has been decimated by budget cuts and incompetent political appointees. In 1988 EPA's workload was twice that of 1981, yet its budgetary purchasing power was the same as in 1975. Programs directed toward compliance with pollution control laws, research, standard setting, and regulation have deteriorated as a result of Executive Order 12291 (which gives the Office of Management and Budget virtual veto power over EPA regulations), widespread budget cuts, and inadequate Presidential leadership.

The federal government's record on controlling toxic wastes from its

own facilities is shameful. Some of the most dangerous contamination in the country has been caused by the Defense Department and the Energy Department, especially at nuclear weapons production facilities. It has been estimated that cleanup of these sites will cost more than one hundred billion dollars.

To succeed in curbing pollution, we must deal with the root cause: the generation of waste. Americans must do more to reduce the amount of waste we generate, and increase the amount of material that we recycle and reuse. The benefits of producing less waste would be felt everywhere: in the air, on the land, and in groundwater, rivers, and oceans. The new administration should make waste reduction and recycling a national imperative. Reduction and recycling can be done cost-effectively, and are absolutely essential on a national basis.

#### **Recommended Presidential Actions:**

*The President should support and work vigorously for reauthorization of the Clean Air Act, including acid rain controls that will eliminate at least twelve million tons of sulphur dioxide and four million tons of nitrogen oxides by the year 1998, rigorous standards for toxic air emissions, and deadlines that will bring all areas of the country rapidly into compliance with standards for healthy air. Factions in the Congress and an uncooperative President have delayed reauthorization of this key statute for too many years. Strong Presidential leadership is essential to protect our health and the environment.*

*The President should direct EPA and the Agriculture Department to make control of non-point sources of water pollution, including storm runoff, a high priority. EPA should require states to control runoff pollution. State non-point source programs must be fully funded. The Department should use its subsidy mechanisms and technical assistance programs to encourage better farming practices, including the planting of buffer strips to prevent erosion and run-off.*

*The President should make waste reduction and recycling a national priority for both hazardous and solid wastes, through economic incentives to reduce wastes and technical assistance to help state and local governments establish effective waste reduction and recycling programs. EPA should evaluate all regulatory programs for waste reduction opportunities.*

*The President's fiscal year 1990 budget should request at least a 20 percent increase in EPA's resources.*

*The President should order the Secretaries of Defense and Energy to develop plans to implement strategies to clean up hazardous waste at federal*

*facilities*, especially those facilities that pose the greatest risk to health and the environment.

### **Population Growth**

There are getting to be too many of us. There are already many places where human concentrations have overwhelmed the ability of the environment to support them at a quality of life that is humane and acceptable. Unless measures are implemented to constrain population growth, more and more parts of the planet will become overcrowded and unable to support life on a sustainable basis.

Great inequities now exist among the peoples of the world in terms of standards of living. As a consequence, per capita impact on the earth's resource base varies dramatically. Americans, constituting five percent of the earth's population, consume approximately 25 percent of the earth's resources. The impact of each American on the earth's resources is many times that of a person in a less developed society. Yet the earth's resources are insufficient to bring all of its current human inhabitants up to the living standard of Americans.

The dilemma we face — an ever increasing population on a finite resource base — is readily apparent. Application of technology can help greatly, but is not a panacea. If we are to assure a sustainable future with an acceptable quality of life for all people, constraints on human population growth are urgently needed.

It took the human species more than a million years to reach a global population of one billion. That event occurred around 1830. But it took only 100 years more for world population to double to two billion. By 1950, world population hit two and a half billion and ecologists started talking about the "population explosion."

Explosive it has been. By 1987, world population reached five billion. It will take only eleven more years for an additional one billion people to be added to the global population — by the year 1998. World population will have tripled during the lifetime of most Americans.

We have begun to strain the limits of the global life support systems — our oceans, farmlands, forests, and wetlands. Ever more of us are consuming ever more of the earth's resources, dooming hundreds of millions of the earth's inhabitants to a life described by philosopher Thomas Hobbes as "poor, nasty, brutish, and short."

The most rapid population growth is occurring in developing nations, primarily in rural areas. In many Third World cities, population is doubling every decade. Throughout much of the Third World, population growth is

outstripping economic growth, leading to a decline in income per person.

A vicious circle is at work. Countries are unable to create engines for economic growth because their populations are growing too fast. But they are unable to get their population growth under control without the capital that a sound economy generates.

The United States, with the fastest growing population in the industrialized world, also experiences population pressures. The population of Florida is growing faster than that of Kenya, the world's fastest growing nation. As a result, Florida's drinking water supply is in dangerous shape. The population around the Chesapeake Bay, the nation's largest and most valuable estuary, increased 50 percent between 1950 and 1980. The result has been increased pollution run-off that has smothered oyster and clam beds, commercial fishing pressure that has almost wiped out the striped bass, and a decline in the quality of the water in the Bay. There are examples all over the nation of population pressures destroying once productive natural environments. From a global perspective, U.S. population growth has far-reaching effects. Every year, for example, U.S. population growth causes the loss of enough farmland to provide millions of people with a minimum diet.

Population growth is another example of an environmental problem which requires both local and global action. In the United States, we urgently need to establish a clear population policy. We must assure that federal policies and programs promote a balance between population, resources, and environmental quality. We must also strengthen our capacity to plan urban environments to make them more liveable and sustainable.

The United States also must share its growing knowledge and its abundant technological resources with the world. We must help developing nations stabilize their populations, and at the same time, help them eliminate the crushing burdens of poverty. It is in our own best interest to do so.

Halting population growth is fundamental to our efforts to improve the quality of life on earth. Family planning education must be expanded. Effective contraceptives should be universally available. The leaders of the world should seek to overcome cultural barriers that promote unsustainable population growth. This must be done voluntarily, without coercion. Otherwise, it will fail.

Achieving and sustaining a high quality of life for humanity is not attainable without major and immediate actions by all nations of the world to stabilize world population. The United States must play a major role in both example and leadership.

### **Recommended Presidential Actions:**

*The President should establish an official population policy for the United States, and encourage all other nations to do the same.* The overall objective should be stopping population growth worldwide.

*The President should reassert the federal government's support of population and family planning assistance.* This should include restoring financial support for multilateral organizations such as the United Nations Population Fund and the International Planned Parenthood Federation; strengthening the incorporation of population components in economic assistance programs administered by the Agency for International Development; and encouraging the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, and other such funding institutions to incorporate population concerns in their economic assistance programs.

## **PREPARING OUR GOVERNMENT FOR ACTION**

Most of this report discusses the steps that are needed to solve specific problems. But there are overarching actions that must be taken, beginning right now, to show that the new administration is strongly committed to environmental protection and to ensure that our government is capable of acting in the right way.

### **Appoint the Best People**

The new administration's environmental performance will be determined to a great extent by the character and qualifications of the people appointed to fill key positions. The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (who we suggest should become secretary of a new cabinet department), the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration -- each of these people has the power to do much good or harm to the environment of this nation and the earth. The President must choose these appointees with the greatest care.

In the early 1980s, the names of Interior Secretary James Watt and EPA Administrator Ann Gorsuch Burford became synonymous with environmental neglect and mismanagement. This nation and the world cannot afford any more appointees like these. We have submitted to the Presi-

dent-Elect lists of people whose experience and commitment to environmental protection make them highly qualified candidates for key positions.

### **Establish an Effective Presidential Staff**

Effective Presidential leadership will depend on the staff that serves the President. We recommend that the President reorganize the Council on Environmental Quality to turn it into a Presidential staff on the environment, headed by a single director who is highly qualified and trusted by the President. The National Security Council, the domestic policy staff in the White House, and the Office of Management and Budget each must include people highly qualified to deal with environmental issues.

We further recommend that the President establish high-level inter-agency groups to ensure action on broad issues — such as global warming, sustainable development in developing countries, and population stabilization — that cuts across agency lines. Members of the Presidential staff should be assigned to ensure that the work of these groups does not bog down in interagency disputes.

### **Deliver an Environmental Message Early in 1989**

It is essential that the President himself show, by his words and actions, that he truly cares about the environment. President Nixon began, and other Presidents have followed, the tradition of delivering an annual Environmental Message to the Congress and the nation. This proved to be an effective way of underscoring the importance of environmental problems and focusing attention on Presidential proposals for needed actions. Because of the range and scope of the environmental initiatives that are needed at this time, we recommend that the President resume this tradition and deliver, in the early months of his administration, a message that lays out his environmental program.

### **Propose a Fully Adequate Environmental Budget**

Many vitally important federal responsibilities are being neglected due to lack of staff and other resources. Some budget increases are essential if we are to prevent environmental degradation and the necessity of much greater expenditures later on. Mindful of the federal budget deficit, we do not recommend vast new expenditures. Many needed actions can be funded by redirecting federal spending. But it is absolutely essential that the budget submitted next February or March — a budget that will prevail

until October 1991 — reflect careful analysis of environmental needs and include adequate resources to meet them.

The increases we recommend include: EPA, which has been shamefully neglected; the Land and Water Conservation Fund, essential to preserve our natural and cultural heritage; a variety of actions to prevent global warming of the atmosphere and prevent mass extinctions of plant and animal species; assistance to help developing countries solve urgent problems of population growth and environmental degradation; and financial contributions to key international organizations like the United Nations Environment Program.

The formidable challenges posed by global climate change, destruction of tropical forests, elimination of biological diversity, and the explosion of world population require major new funding commitments on the order of several billion dollars if we hope to resolve them.

To obtain the essential funding to address these global issues, we seek to curtail environmentally destructive tax subsidies for irrigating surplus crops, for uranium enrichment services, for pork barrel water projects, and for below-cost timber sales. Cutting tax loopholes, imposing certain user fees, and increasing the gasoline tax can raise \$17 billion. Just a one-cent-per-gallon increase in the gasoline tax will raise one billion dollars. The public will support such initiatives if the money is to be used to solve these urgent environmental problems.

### **Provide International Leadership**

Global environmental problems cast a shadow over humanity's future. These problems can be solved only through international cooperation. This requires leadership by the President.

The President should act as rapidly as possible to fulfill his campaign pledge to call for a Global Environmental Summit meeting of world leaders. The President should ensure that environmental issues are discussed at other major international meetings, such as the 1989 Western Economic Summit and any U.S.-Soviet summits. He should stress the importance of these issues in all his meetings with foreign leaders and instruct his ambassadors to do the same.

### **Create a New Department of Environmental Protection**

The environmental problems we face are of the greatest importance to this nation and the world. Those with principal responsibility for deal-

ing with them must sit in the highest councils of government. Therefore, we recommend that the President propose to the Congress the creation of a new, cabinet-level Department of Environmental Protection to replace the present Environmental Protection Agency.

#### **Convene a White House Conference on the Environment**

Public understanding and the broadest possible consensus are essential if we are to meet the environmental challenges we face. Therefore, we suggest that the President convene, late in 1989, a White House Conference on the Environment, resuming a tradition begun by Theodore Roosevelt with the 1908 Governors' Conference on Natural Resources. The participants should include governors, mayors, Members of Congress, scientists, educators, environmentalists, and representatives of business, labor, and religious, women's, minority, and other groups. The purpose should be to foster understanding of the problems we face and to formulate and adopt action plans to address our environmental problems.

#### **Ensure Foresight in Federal Decisions**

The environmental issues we face are long-term and affect many aspects of our national life. We must be sure that executive branch decisions do not inadvertently make these problems worse, and that the solutions we pursue are the best we can devise. Therefore, we recommend that the President issue an executive order establishing a new, government-wide process designed to ensure that all the consequences of proposed decisions including long-term, international, and cross-cutting effects are taken into account. This "foresight" process should apply especially to Presidential decisions. It should be coordinated by an official very close to the President, such as the White House Chief of Staff.

### **CONCLUSION**

We face an unprecedented environmental crisis. The policies and actions of our new President and his administration will do much to determine whether the earth we love will remain a habitable place. Adoption of the recommendations presented in this report would do much to set our country and the world on a course that will sustain life now and forever.

We and our organizations will do all we can to ensure that these recommendations are implemented as soon as possible. We ask other elected officials and our fellow citizens to join with us in this vitally important effort.

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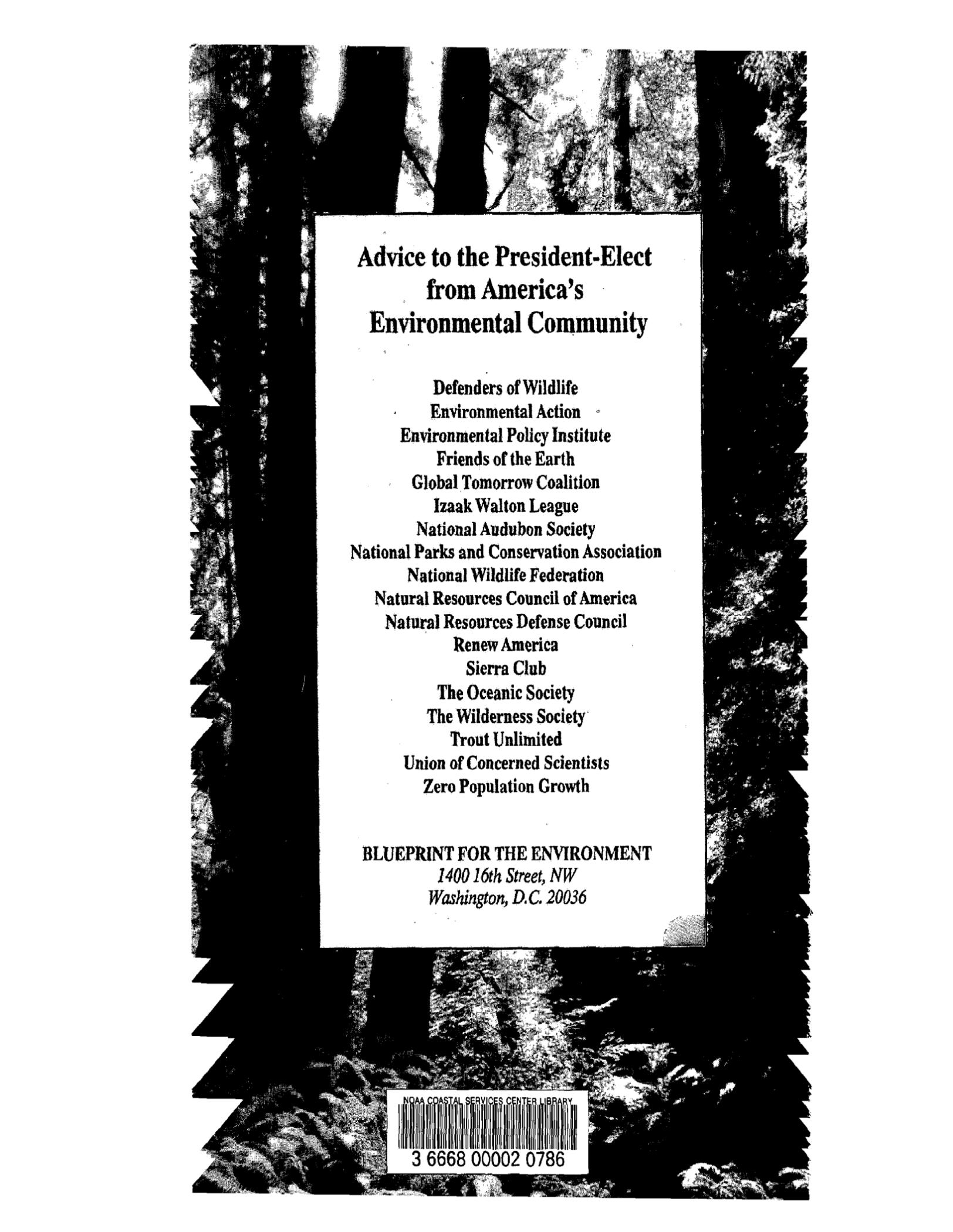
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